

PASSING THROUGH THE FIERY
TRIALS OF DEMOCRACY TO
SAVE AND RENEW OUR REPUB-
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HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 25, 2021

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, as a senior member of the Committees on the Judiciary and on Homeland Security, as the descendant of patriotic and heroic veterans who risked their lives to defend our nation and our freedoms, as a parent with the fervent hope and determination to pass on this great democracy to the next generation, and as a citizen of the greatest republic in world history, I rise to reflect on the state of our democracy as it is about to open a new chapter in the remarkable story of America.

In 1776, the Framers declared the self-evident and later the universal truth that all persons are created equal and endowed by their Creator with the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. As important, the Framers declared that "to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just power from the consent of the governed." This genius of self-government is the Framers' gift to us and America's gift to the world, and for nearly 250 years the world has looked upon the United States with wonder, awe, and envy not just for its awesome powers and achievements, but for being the exemplar to which most freedom-loving nations aspire.

But as President Lincoln reminded us at Gettysburg, the proposition that a people can govern themselves is not to be taken for granted; it is a proposition that will be tested time and again and it for us, the living, to highly resolve to commit ourselves to the great task always before us, that government of the people, by the people, and for the people not perish from the earth.

As Thomas Paine said in his time, the past four years were times that tried one's soul. The nation was tested, severely so, by what can only be described as the modern-day Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: a deadly pandemic, economic devastation unseen since the Great Depression, social justice unrest, and the very real threat of authoritarianism. While the threat posed by these challenges are still with us to varying extent, we can all rejoice that the nation withstood the challenge, *e pluribus unum*, by standing together as "We The People." President Lincoln reminded us that in times of testing and challenge that "the fiery trial through which we pass will mark us down in honor or dishonor until the latest generation" but that so long as the people "retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years."

And Lincoln was right, for on Election Day 2020, Americans by a substantial majority, voted to withhold consent to govern from an incumbent administration and confer it upon another. That act of self-government and sovereign expression was solemnized on January 20, 2021, at noon when Joseph R. Biden and KAMALA D. HARRIS took the oath of office as the 46th President and 49th Vice-President of the United States.

The Philadelphia Miracle of 1789 endures but only because we Americans resolve that it does and work to make it so. The President takes the oath of office pledging to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution. As does every one of my congressional colleagues, I have sacredly pledged true faith and allegiance in defending the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic and to well and faithfully execute the duties of the office I hold. I do this ever mindful that the purpose of our form of government is "to form a more perfect union, to establish justice, to insure domestic tranquility, to provide for the common defense, to promote the general welfare, and to secure the blessings of liberty for posterity."

But we all have a responsibility to preserve and strengthen this constitutional republic and pass it on to the next generation by engaging in robust, lawful, and peaceful civic activity to hold our government to account and to peaceably assemble when necessary to petition for a redress of grievances as shown by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the March on Washington, following the example of Mahatma Gandhi; by John Lewis and the Civil Rights foot soldiers at the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama; by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott at Seneca Falls; by Cesar Chavez leading the fight for human dignity of farmworkers, and by Black Lives Matter demonstrators protesting inequalities in the criminal justice system. For the work of democracy is never complete, our union is always in the process of being made more perfect.

Americans have suffered, endured, and survived much pain and heartbreak over the past four years. But Psalms 30:5 teaches that "weeping lasteth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." So, let us all be of good cheer, for tomorrow, at the end of morning, a new day dawns in America with the inauguration of President Biden and Vice-President HARRIS and our collective journey towards the beloved community continues inexorably forward.

REMEMBERING KEITH E.
FREELAND

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 25, 2021

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I would like to include in the Record the following obituary for Keith E. Freeland.

With deep sorrow we pronounce the passing of Keith E. Freeland of Lewiston, NY on Friday, January 1, 2021. He passed away peacefully at the age of 67. Born in Niagara Falls, NY, he was the son of the late Edward C. and Norma E. (Klipfel) Freeland. He was raised along with his three sisters in Ransomville, NY. Keith married Christine A. (Covatta) Freeland in Lewiston, NY on October 18, 1975 and was a devoted and loving husband for 45 years.

Keith attended Lewiston-Porter High School and graduated from Buffalo State College with a degree in business education. He ultimately pursued his life-long career in manufacturing and sales, founding Package Design and Supply in 1995. Viewed as a kind, selfless and devoted leader, he demonstrated unwavering loyalty and compassion to all of his beloved employees and colleagues.

Keith not only excelled in his career but he was devoted to several hobbies. Boating was

his ultimate passion and anytime the sun was shining in the summer you could find him at the boat docks in Lewiston or cruising along the Lower Niagara River. He was fervent about the community of friends who shared his desire for being on the water; often traveling and seeking new adventures each summer. Keith was a dedicated board member of the Youngstown Yacht Club aiding in annual fundraising events. He also enjoyed vintage car restoration, proudly displaying vehicles he worked so tirelessly on at various local shows. Keith found solace in meticulously maintaining his yard in Thornwood Forest and working diligently on various projects around the home he so cherished. He was an avid Buffalo sports fan and longtime season ticket holder for his beloved Bills and Sabres, for whom he shared in the joys and sorrows with his two sons.

Above all, Keith cared about family and he would stop at nothing to be there for them. He instilled in them the value of hard work, honesty, loyalty and simply to be thankful and appreciative. In addition to his wife of 45 years, Keith is survived by his children, Dr. Erik Freeland, Jeffrey Freeland, and Julie Freeland; his siblings, Kathy (late Dr. F. Craig) Fisher of Chicago, IL and Jane (Greg) DiPietro of League City, TX. He was predeceased by his sister, Linda (James) Giardino of Scottsdale, AZ. He is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, and countless friends.

IN RECOGNITION OF ROSEMARY
HEARD, FORMER PRESIDENT OF
CATCH NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 25, 2021

Ms. KUSTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Rosemary Heard's life, career and many years of service as President and Chief Executive Officer of CATCH Neighborhood Housing.

As President, Rosemary was responsible for the administration and management of CATCH Neighborhood Housing, an organization whose mission is to make sure every person is confident in having a place to call home. Rosemary's ingenuity led to the construction of numerous new affordable housing units and revitalized existing housing in areas where affordable options are limited.

Rosemary's dedication to her community and bettering the lives of others did not stop at CATCH. She also served on the Municipal Housing Commission for the City of Concord, the Public Policy Committee for the National NeighborWorks Association, the City of Concord's Plan to End Homelessness, and Concord Hospital's Board of Trustees. Recognized for her professional excellence, Rosemary was the recipient of a Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce 2019 Business Leader of the Year award.

On behalf of New Hampshire's Second Congressional District and all those who have been impacted by Rosemary's important work, I'd like to thank Rosemary for her commitment to and passion for housing security that will continue to benefit Granite Staters for years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VICKY HARTZLER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 25, 2021

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam, Speaker, I was unable to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call No. 18.

PROVIDING FOR EXCEPTION TO
LIMITATION AGAINST APPOINT-
MENT OF PERSONS AS SEC-
RETARY OF DEFENSE WITHIN
SEVEN YEARS OF RELIEF FROM
ACTIVE DUTY

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL POSEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, through the National Security Act, Congress required that the Secretary of Defense be from civilian life and placed a limitation on the appointment of former military personnel to that position mandating that a nominee be retired from military service for ten years. In 2008, Congress shortened that period to seven years.

I have several concerns which I would like to express and go on record in opposition to providing a waiver. First, I thank the General for his service to our nation in uniform. I have reservations about providing yet another waiver from the law intended to preserve civilian leadership in the role of Secretary of Defense. If confirmed as Secretary of Defense by the U.S. Senate, after fewer than five years from his last military assignment, General Lloyd Austin (Ret.) will be expected to uphold the principles of civilian control of the military.

My hope is that General Austin's focus will be ensuring that our nation is prepared to meet head-on the threat posed by adversaries including China, Russia, and Iran. He should follow and focus on the bipartisan 2018 National Defense Strategy that stresses the need to strengthen our military for potential major conflict. Mr. Austin should work to preserve the strategic nuclear triad, protect and ensure American space superiority, and maintain Naval supremacy as cornerstones of our freedom.

Serving as our nation's Secretary of Defense is an awesome responsibility and I await the U.S. Senate vetting General Austin as the U.S. Senate has the responsibility under the Constitution of reviewing Presidential nominees.

IN RECOGNITION OF HER SERVICE:
MS. JUDITH MITCHELL

HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 25, 2021

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Judith Mitchell and her career of public service.

After 11 years of dedicated public service, Ms. Mitchell will be retiring from public service.

Ms. Mitchell served with honor as Rolling Hills Estate Mayor and Council Member for her city, Southland, her state and the nation. Ms. Mitchell showed her fairness, depth of knowledge and dedication to improving the quality of life for all.

During her political career, Ms. Mitchell was elected to represent 51 cities in the western portion of Los Angeles County which she represented through the Governing Board of the South Coast Air Quality Management District. Ms. Mitchell was then appointed to the California Air Resources Board under Governor Edmund J. Brown, and additionally served as the President of the League of California Cities where she chaired several key environmental committees. Her work on these two agencies, helped to spur technological innovation to create jobs and economic growth in the Southland and across the nation.

Ms. Mitchell's legacy for clean air policies and her unwavering support for green technologies has not only helped those most impacted in her community, but these efforts have a direct impact on my Congressional District. These clean air advancements will also assist other States and regions to help meet federal public health standards and build a foundation for the United States technological and industrial leadership.

It is with great pride and gratitude that I extend my best wishes to Ms. Judith Mitchell upon her retirement and ask that my distinguished colleagues join me in honoring her.

CONDEMNING IRRESPONSIBLE
DEFAMATION IN CONGRESS

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 25, 2021

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my dismay that members of Congress are making unfounded claims of treason and sedition against their colleagues without evidence to back their outlandish claims. By this, I mean the numerous members alleging that members aided in "reconnaissance" tours for those individuals who would storm the Capitol during the Electoral College certification.

These accusations leveled by several members make these bold statements without offering a shred of evidence. In fact, over 30 members put their names on a letter which made these allegations without even an indication to whom they were referring to. In the absence of fact, these accusations have allowed conspiracy to permeate the narrative from the deepest enclaves of the Internet. Leftist media sources, from major 24 hour broadcast companies to blogs, have picked up on these hollow accusations, and the effects have been damaging.

Since evidence and due process have been replaced with speculation, members of Congress are being deemed guilty of these crimes, including myself. In fact, there is now a narrative running that since I supported the objection to the certification of the count, I must be one of the members guilty of this treason. Multiple media sources have reported as "fact" that me and other objectors conducted tours of the Capitol to do some type of "reconnaissance". This is patently and un-

equivocally false. They offered no proof of this scurrilous and defamatory falsehood. I asked Capitol Police to pull and preserve all video footage from House security cameras which can establish with finality who, if anyone, gave even one tour during the days leading to the unrest. I can say this: my office has not given a tour since February 2020. The continuing publication of this defamation by members of Congress and media is unprofessional, unethical, and actionable.

The increase in violent, threatening messages received in our offices because of the irresponsible political messaging from my colleagues in coordination with their media pals is sickening and indicative of our larger societal issues, such as a media which tells their viewers what they know to be true, not what the facts are. So, let me set the record straight. I have not given a tour of the Capitol since 2017, and my staff has not given a tour since they closed to the public early in 2020 as a COVID-19 response. Further, at no time did anyone with Stop the Steal talk to me about violence, and my efforts to speak to the American people and fight for my constituents were guided by the First Amendment and the Electoral Count Act of 1878.

Madam Speaker, the purpose of this body is to serve as the voice of the American people, a voice which speaks with honesty to conduct the business of this country and contribute to the overall good. Yet, the passions of humanity can undermine these principles, and these unfounded accusations are a menace to the traditions of this body. Therefore, Madam Speaker, I condemn my colleagues irresponsible actions and their use of their official powers to fuel a media spectacle for their own political benefit. Their willingness to set these mistruths into the public and not interject when the truth is deviated from and innocent people are blamed is defamation, conspiratorial, and faulty justice. Much like McCarthyism or the witch hunt conducted these last four years, history will not look kindly on this abuse of Congressional power, and therefore I implore my colleagues to either set the record straight with evidence or retract these claims immediately to resecure their position in history.

REINTRODUCTION OF THE COM-
PREHENSIVE BREAST RECON-
STRUCTION ACT

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 25, 2021

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce the Comprehensive Breast Reconstruction Act. This legislation will bring Medicaid and Medicare programs into compliance with the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998, and will expand post-mastectomy breast reconstruction patients' access to modern and innovative procedures, products, and therapies to support their return to a healthy normal.

In 2020 alone, almost 280,000 new instances of breast cancer were estimated to have been diagnosed, and anticipated deaths from breast cancer were over 42,000. However, the breast cancer survival rate has steadily increased faster than the rate of new diagnoses, which is believed to be related to